

# Christina River Basin

## Clean Water Partnership Receives \$1 Million EPA Watershed Initiative Grant

Several noteworthy events took place during 2002-2003 as a result of continuing efforts by the Christina Basin Clean Water Partnership, of which the DRBC is a member, to preserve and protect this interstate subbasin of the Delaware River Watershed that drains portions of Pennsylvania, Delaware, and Maryland.

On November 18, 2002, approximately 100 persons attended the partnership's "Clean Water is Good Business" program which was held in Kennett Square, Pa. The keynote speakers were Congressmen Joseph R. Pitts (R - Pa.) and Michael N. Castle (R - Del.), who together

represent most of the residents of the 565-square-mile interstate watershed in the U.S. House of Representatives. In addition to offering brief remarks, the two members of Congress shared copies of a joint letter they signed in strong support of a \$1 million grant application submitted by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and the State of Delaware to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Watershed Initiative Grant program.

Following welcoming remarks by DRBC Commissioners Irene Brooks (Pa.) and Kevin Donnelly (Del.), a "State of the Watershed" presentation was provided by Jan Bowers (Chester County Water Resources Authority [WRA]) and Gerald Kauffman (University of Delaware WRA). The program also featured a panel discussion moderated by DRBC Executive Director Carol R. Collier.

Less than six months later, EPA announced in May 2003 that the partnership had been selected to receive the requested \$1 million grant to restore and protect this interstate subbasin. The funds will be used to implement agricultural and stormwater Best Management Practices in targeted areas as well as SMARTYARD homeowner landscape projects. The partnership was one of only 20 community-based groups (out of 176 applications) receiving funding under the \$15 million national program and its application received the highest ranking of all those submitted.

Because of its unique ability to manage watersheds without regard to state borders, the DRBC's role in promoting interstate coordination and cooperation has been an important factor in the ongoing success of this clean water partnership.

The basin includes the Christina River (which eventually flows into the Delaware River in Wilmington, Del.), Brandywine Creek, White Clay Creek (which was added to the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System in 2000), and Red Clay Creek. It provides water to over 500,000 people, including 75% of the water supply for New Castle County, Del. and more than 40% of the water supply for residents in Chester County, Pa.

To learn more about this ongoing interstate project, please visit the DRBC's web site at <http://www.nj.gov/drbc/christinabasin.htm>.



U.S. Rep. Joseph Pitts (left), DRBC Commissioner Irene Brooks, and U.S. Rep. Michael Castle listen to a question from the audience at the "Clean Water is Good Business" program.  
(Photo by Clarke Rupert)



EPA Regional Administrator Donald S. Welsh formally presented the \$1 million Watershed Initiative grant to the Christina Basin Clean Water Partnership at the Ashland Nature Center in Hockessin, Del. on November 7, 2003. DRBC Executive Director Carol R. Collier accepted the ceremonial check on behalf of the partnership. (Photo by Jonathan Zangwill)